1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Child suckled.

597 853 As a rule, the child remains with its real mother till weaned. Sometimes, however, if the adopting mother has just lost her own child in childbirth or shortly after, and is still lactating, she will herself immediately take the child and suckle it, carrying it back to its own mother when it cries, until the transference from the real to the adopting mother has been fully effected.

Adopting father indemnifies real father with pigs.

597 431 When the child is weaned and finally taken over by the adopting parents, the adopting father indemnifies the real father by giving him a circle-tusker or a re-entrant-tusker,[1] and four or five smaller pigs as payment.

If the child dies before this payment has been made, none is demanded. If, on the other hand, it dies shortly after payment, no claim will be laid to their return.

I have no account as to which of the two families perform the remaining rites connected with birth. It is presumably the adopting father who pays the mother's brother for the child on the Fifth Day, but the real mother who performs the purification rites held on the Tenth and Thirtieth Days. Rites connected with the birth of an eldest son do not come in question, since an eldest child may not be adopted.

[1] For explanation of these technical terms regarding the growth of pigs' tusks, see pp. 948 ff.

2: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1936
OO12 Malekula OO12
Small Islands

of the white man made this position untenable, and they could conceive no possible compromise. If the white man stayed they must die out, as had so many of their neighbours. Some of the young men also said, "What, if this be the case, is the use of rearing children?" and there is no doubt that among this section of the community abortions were common, as pedigrees bear out in the clear diminution of the number of births. There was however a third section of the community, the younger men who had never known the time before the white man came, who were already born into an atmosphere of inevitable compromise, for whom the glamour of the white man's superior material civilization was tempered with a shrewd sense of his weaknesses and some knowledge of how to deal with him. These were the men who were bent on rehabilitating Atchin culture, while at the same time incorporating into it such new elements as seemed not to conflict too greatly with it. One such was Lawak, then my chief friend and informant, now, according to Mr. Harrisson, the most influential man on the island, who had spent two years of his youth in the French penal settlement of Noumea, who was one of the few young men of my day to take to him two wives, and who, his first wife being sick, himself reared her baby son by feeding him on the juices of fruits; nor shall I ever forget his delight when the boy first began to run. I must confess that in 1914, while admiring their efforts, I had little hope in their ultimate success. Time has shown otherwise. The population has increased and is increasing now. It is to such men as Lawak who, through knowledge of the white man and how to deal with him, had hope in the future but at the same time preserved their independence of mind and love of their own culture, that the present increase in population and renaissance of culture is due.

The author is hoping to publish a detailed account of the social organization, religion, language, music, and sea-faring activities of the inhabitants of the small islands off the north-east coast of Malekula, in a series of volumes entitled, 'Stone Men of Malekula.' The first volume, dealing with the island of Vao, is to appear this autumn.

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